

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-11 are pending.

The principal feature of the present invention is in that respective operation modes for an inward three-fold and a Z-fold can be performed by an identical sheet postprocessing apparatus. For this purpose, the sheet postprocessing apparatus of the present invention is provided with a setting unit, so that it becomes possible to select either one of the inward three-fold process and the Z-fold process. One of these folding processes is realized by performing a positioning control of first and second abutting members 78 and 86. In addition, the sheet postprocessing apparatus of the present invention has a compact size and a simple structure, because during a center folding process, the inward three-fold process or the Z-fold process, the same sheet convey path can be used from a first crease forming unit to a second crease forming unit. (The inward three-fold process of the present invention shown in Figs. 8A and 8B is realized by controlling the first and second crease forming units as illustrated in Figs. 9A to 9E and shown in the description on page 21, line 6 to page 23, line 23 of the specification.)

Regarding Kanou et al., Kanou et al. fail to disclose or suggests the inward three-fold and the control manner thereof. Regarding Cross et al., Cross et al. also do not disclose or suggest the inward three-fold of the present invention. Accordingly, the claims are patentable over the references cited by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

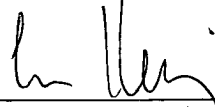
Since all claims are in a condition for allowance, please issue a Notice of Allowability so stating. Should the Examiner have any questions or concerns, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney of record.

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Respectfully submitted,



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